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measure of independence in taxation, jurisdiction, and political management in general.[1]

In this connexion, we must point out an important development in the history of Nupe kingdom, which in turn greatly affected Kede history. The royal dynasty of Nupe, which traced its origin back to the mythical Tsoede, was in power till the earlier half of last century, when Nupe kingdom, like most of the Native states in Northern Nigeria, fell under the rule of Emirs of Fulani stock who had conquered the country and deposed the indigenous kings. We have no data on the relation between Kede autonomy and the Nupe State under the old dynasty. But it is certain that under Fulani rule conflicts constantly arose, partly perhaps because the Kede (like many other Nupe sections) resented the alien rule, but to a large extent certainly because the Fulani kings, much more than the Nupe rulers before them, had to curb in their own interest the autonomous leanings of their Kede vassals. The Fulani, whose wars at that time were directed chiefly against tribes in the south, could not afford to let an all too independent section control the river—the southern boundary and at the same time the vital artery of trade and traffic of the country. Slave trade, the economic mainstay of the pre-British rulers of central Nigeria, traffic in arms and powder, and troop transports for their military expeditions, all had to cross the River Niger on Kede territory.[2] The Fulani overlords enforced their sovereignty in a number of wars and punitive expeditions, in the course of which (if the reports are true) hundreds were killed, thousands of Kede sold as slaves by the victorious Fulani, Kede notables executed in Bida, and whole districts of Kede country devastated. A typical instance is the Katcha War—the answer of the Fulani to the first attempt of

[1] There exists certain evidence to show that the Kede chiefs succeeded in enlarging their judicial power at the cost of their overlords and usurped a certain judicial machinery of the Nupe State which had evolved in the river area. To-day, at any rate, the Kede claim that this judicial machinery was under the authority of the *Kutu*, while other, non-Kede, informants state that it represented entirely a prerogative of the kings of Nupe. I am referring to the *Ledu* (lit. prison) villages on the banks of the Niger, which were so called because they served as prisons and places of execution for criminals convicted, by the king's court, of a 'crime of the king'. I have described this system and the attempts of the Kede to claim it as their own in *Man* (1935), 143.

[2] The importance, for example, of Raba as a river port for slave traffic to the south is pointed out by Lander (*Journal of an Expedition* (1832), ii, p. 298). Laird and Oldfield speak of 600 Kede canoes, 'all of which may be employed for Ful troops to cross the Niger on war expeditions' (op. cit., ii, p. 315).